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<http://www.education.ne.gov/ADED/index.html>

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A New Challenge and Opportunity for AE

By: Vicki Bauer, State Adult Education Director

I had a phone call a few months ago from a person who “just wanted to keep the same (2002 series) GED® tests, there is no need to change.” The person was not involved in the Adult Education program; nor was he a potential GED® examinee. I was a little stunned – I was looking forward to an updated test for high school equivalency and one that could also assess college and career readiness (CCR) – it really was time.

It has been over a decade since the 2002 series was introduced and a lot has happened in the past 12 years in the field of education, and that includes adult education.

We have all heard that education in the United States must keep pace with the world if we are to remain globally competitive. Our education is our future and that most definitely includes Adult Education. Adult Education cannot stand still while the world around us is changing. If Adult Education fails to change,

we will be seen as an obsolete program; using outdated methods and achieving mediocre results.

One of the greatest opportunities and challenges we are facing now and for the next few years is the incorporation of college and career readiness (CCR) standards for our Nebraska Adult Education program. CCR is a national initiative for Adult Education, which means it is also a state and local initiative for our Adult Education program.

The Nebraska K-12 system is expected to graduate students who are college and career ready; that same expectation holds true for our Adult Education students as well.

CCR standards for Adult Education were published last spring. A hard copy was given to each program director last September at our Directors’ meeting.

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NDE Letter Contract Reminder

By: Jan Drbal, Nebraska Adult Education Professional Assistant — jan.drbal@nebraska.gov

If you are attending an event (conference/training/workshop), a letter contract must be signed and returned to NDE prior to the event.

Three very important steps:

- ▶ 10 workdays before the event, the registration form must be sent to NDE. It must include **name**, address, phone number, printed/legible **e-mail address**, and **program** (ex. Central Community College).
- ▶ 7 workdays before the event, a letter contract will be sent through email from me and EchoSign (You may find this in your junk mail).
- ▶ 5 workdays before the event, the letter contract should be signed and submitted.

No expenses or stipends can be incurred before the letter contract is signed and returned to NDE.

If you do not receive the letter contract 7 days before the event or have questions/concerns, please let me know via e-mail or phone call. **Jan Drbal, 402/471-4830, jan.drbal@nebraska.gov**

A New Challenge and Opportunity for AE, continued

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You can get a copy from your local program director or you can email me and I will send you the PDF file.

You may ask, "Why do we need CCR in Adult Education?" The importance cannot be overstated. Increasingly, students entering the workforce are discovering that they need critical knowledge and skills that are used on a regular basis.

They recognize that pursuing a career pathway that pays enough to support a family and provides genuine potential for advancement hinges on being able to perform the complex tasks identified as critical for postsecondary success. It is crucial that Adult Education provide all our students the opportunity to acquire these skills to pursue their long-term career aspirations and goals.

The new series of GED® tests measure a person's completion of a high school equivalency diploma and can

also access his/her college and career readiness. The score range for the new test series is 100-200.

A score of 150 is required for passing and a score of 170 or above indicates college and career readiness (CCR).

In looking at Nebraska's testing results up until February 25, 2014, there had been 189 individual test modules given in Nebraska. Only 9 of those individual test modules had scores of 170 or above.

Granted, many of those individuals tested were walk-ins, and not enrolled in AE classes, but to have less than 10% of the scores fall in the CCR range means we have a lot of work to do to increase that number. How are we going to do that?

To start the process, a Nebraska team will participate in a national training workshop or CCR later this

month. We will then form a committee of interested NE AE staff to assist in developing a plan to incorporate CCR in Nebraska's Adult Education program.

Following the AE conference last year, we had a few people express an interest in serving on that committee. If you want to participate in the CCR initiative, please email me at vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov

Will it be a challenge to incorporate CCR in Adult Education with the limited funds we have? Yes. Will it be easy to "weave" CCR into an already full curriculum? No. Will it be a multi-year project to fully implement? Yes. Will it involve lots of work on our part? Yes. Will it be worth it all? A most definite YES! How can it not be, when we are assisting the thousands of students we serve prepare for successful lives? Join us in the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead!

Additional Time Granted for GED® Math Test



From: The GED® Testing Service

One of the benefits of the 2014 GED® program and computer-based testing is our ability to access much more data and more quickly than ever before. This enables us to better analyze information including how long test-takers spend on each question, and, when needed, adjust parts of the program to more quickly respond to test-taker needs. Based on our analysis of the first six weeks of testing, it has become clear that many test-takers require additional time on one subject test—Mathematical Reasoning. In order to ensure test-takers can fully demonstrate their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, more time has been added to the Mathematical Reasoning test.

As of Friday, February 21, 2014 the standard time allowance on the GED® test - Mathematical Reasoning will be increased by 25 minutes for a total time of 115 minutes.

Important Notes About This Change:

- Test-taker fees will not change
- Test-takers with math appointments will have their testing sessions automatically updated with the new time
- Test-takers who have already taken the Mathematical Reasoning test are eligible for a free retake whether they have passed or not
- The GED Ready™: The Official Practice Test (Mathematical Reasoning) time will increase as well. An additional 13 minutes will be added. Those who have taken the Math GED Ready test has been contacted by email that they can re-take the OPT free of charge.

Please note: The Official Practice Test is a powerful and accurate predictor of student success on the GED® test. More than 95% of test-takers who scored in the "Likely to Pass" score range of GED Ready™ went on to pass that subject of the GED® test.

Is All “Fancy New Learning” Bad?

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant — jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov

From: eSchool News, February 20, 2014

www.eschoolnews.com/2014/02/20/digital-learning-myths-903/?ps=264748-0013000000j0tWg-0033000000qhzOx

I remember being in a classroom a looong time ago (okay – over 40 years ago), and having to defend to my principal why I was using films and film strips in the classroom.

I do admit that a few times during district basketball tournaments, I might have been thinking more about my team than about 7th hour World History (*don't tell*) but I always thought that I had a good reason for using videos in a classroom and the students seemed to remember them better than anything that I said. As a teacher, I always had a legitimate reason for using the video.

Several years later, in another life, I was in charge of Instructional Television and later Instructional Technology in Nebraska. Again I found myself arguing that a teacher using our videos in a classroom was not “goofing off” but was using the media as an integrated part of a classroom curriculum.

I have always found myself, because of personal belief and because of past experience, defending the available media use by students and teachers in classrooms. The idea that television or other media is wrong because it is not how we have always done things has been a constant irritant to me for a long time.

Sure I can, as can you, point out a lot of things in television or other media that is not good and, of which, I wish the producer would be appropriately punished. However, I can also point out a lot that is good and that our students would never be able to experience, save through the media.

This point and the fact that students like to use the new media is reason enough to examine ways to use this new media in your classroom. You will be amazed at how excited your

students will be if something they like to do, and the vast majority of your students like the new media, can be not only fun but educational.

With this thought in mind I am going to borrow, rather extensively, from an article by Sydney Mineer of eSchool News:

As digital learning in the classroom gains more support from educators, parents, and students, a national education group has released a toolkit that defines digital and blended learning, offering tips to help promote the benefits of a more digital-centric education.

The Center for Education Reform's 2014 Digital Learning Toolkit defines blended learning as “an approach that involves a myriad of delivery mechanisms via online tools for students, no matter where they live or attend school.”

The toolkit offers tips on how to debunk myths about online learning, ways to change public discourse, and how to clearly promote and express blended learning's benefits to community leaders, the media, and policymakers.

According to the toolkit, one key tip involves using data to back up arguments in favor of digital and blended learning, because data showing real results can have a powerful impact.

Another is to define objectives instead of simply asking for change—in fact, that's the basis to all successful technology initiatives in schools: Defining an objective or goal and then determining the best path and tool to achieve desired outcomes.

Eight digital learning myths:

We can just say ‘innovation’ and

look like we're doing something.

According to an October 2013 poll from the Center for Education Reform, when asked to name a promising new educational innovation, most participants simply answered “technology,” as in computers and the internet.

Using the word “innovation” doesn't ignite any sparks for the average citizen. To really discuss innovation, proponents should talk about real progress and student results.

Online learning is a short-term trend. Online learning comes in many different forms, be it an online class, webinars, blended learning programs, or virtual charter schools.

According to the Center for Education Reform, “the number of students attending full-time online schools has grown from approximately 200,000 in 2009-2010 to 310,000 in 2012-2013.” Additionally, 48 of the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, are offering some form of online learning opportunities.

Online learning is only for gifted students. Online learning is a great tool for any and all students, according to the toolkit. It lets students work and learn at their own pace, allowing them to spend more time on concepts that are more challenging to them. It also is a great tool for students who don't have as many schooling options available to them, such as those who live in rural or inner city areas or those with special needs.

Online learning is only available to families with computers. Schools that offer blended and digital learning provide students with computers and other tools they may need to participate. They often open media centers during non-school hours.

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Is All “Fancy New Learning” Bad?, continued

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Online learning is cheaper. Though there’s no physical classroom to go to, online learning still requires a great deal of funding. Online learning institutions need computers, technology programs, teachers, and various other employees to keep the programs running, and because online learning is still somewhat controversial, it does not always receive the funding it requires, which can drive up the price of classes.

Online learning has no real accountability. Virtual schools are held to state and federal standards, as are the institutions’ teachers. Students participating in online classes

are expected to attend, participate, and take tests just like students who sit in a physical classroom.

Online learning isn’t getting positive results. According to the Center for Education Reform, the best way to measure the success of digital learning is by measuring growth in academic performance. Though digital learning programs have created their own assessments that do show progress, there are currently no state programs to measure this growth.

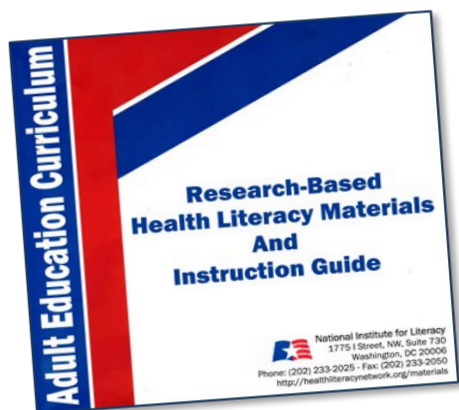
Online students have no social interaction. Students who take online classes get the same or more

individual time with teachers and the other students as they would in a physical classroom. Virtual classrooms also give shy students a platform to participate where they may be uncomfortable to do so in person. Most classes are only part-time, so students take a couple classes online and the rest in a traditional school setting, allowing them to experience the best of both worlds.

I hope you have your own reasons for blending digital learning into your curriculum but maybe this will help you to explain to those who question your use of blending digital learning into the curriculum.

Health Literacy Vocabulary

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant — jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov



The following is another example of a portion of a unit from the *Research-Based Health Literacy Materials and Instruction Guide* that is available through your program or at <http://lincs.ed.gov/health/health>.

This is only an example of the material available in the Curriculum. If you are not currently using these materials, please check them out. You and your students have a lot to gain!

If you have seen the materials, you will know what I am talking about as it is a Red, White and Blue notebook which is about eight inches thick and has Health Literacy Curriculum

printed on the spine.

HEALTH UNIT: 6 Vocabulary

The following is from the Health Unit: Section 6, Preventive Care: Physical Activity and Good Nutrition

Directions: Check word meanings orally with students. Discuss meanings and give example for any unknown words or concepts. Use graphics and Reading Passage in Section 6 to help clarify.

Physical Activity Muscles: body tissue made up of bundles of cells or fibers that move body parts by lengthening and shortening.

Joints: the joining or connection between two or more bones.

High blood pressure: when blood flows through the arteries at a greater than normal force; also called “hypertension.” This can harm the arteries and increase risk of stroke, heart attack, and other diseases.

Diet: the usual food and drink consumed.

Good nutrition: all foods; the physical and chemical process by which food is taken in and used by the body.

Energy: the capacity for doing work, or the conversion of this capability.

Supplemental Vocabulary (words which may come up in oral discussions or other activities).

Habit: usual pattern of behavior.

Motivate: to cause someone to want to do something.

Couch potato: (*slang*) a person who never exercises and who watches a lot of tv or plays a lot of video games.

Cold turkey: (*slang*) to give up a habit abruptly or all at once.

Life-altering: describes a change that is big enough to affect a person’s life significantly.

Health-conscious: aware of how personal choices in diet, exercise, rest, etc. affect one’s health.

Spotlight on...

Nebraska Adult Education Programs & GED® Success!

In Memoriam

Bill Graham—Aurora Advisory Committee Volunteer

Contributed by Ann Chambers, Central Community College Adult Education Director

Bill Graham passed away on February 14, 2014. It might not be a coincidence that a man who had a caring heart would leave us on this specific holiday.

Bill was born in Georgia, but lived many years in Aurora, Nebraska. He attended Aurora High School but entered the military where he served two tours in Vietnam between 1965 and 1968. While in the Navy, Bill earned his GED® diploma.

After returning to Aurora, he worked in several jobs, but in his spare time he was an advocate for Pointman Ministries, an organization that works with

disabled veterans suffering from PTSD, in addition to being a member of several veterans' organizations.

He also continued to strongly support Adult Education and the GED® program in Aurora. He joined our advisory committee on July 24, 1991 and made every annual meeting that his health would allow.

Because Bill became disabled in 1988, he used his time to make calls for Adult Education, mentioned the GED® program whenever he could to anybody who could help.

The Aurora advisory committee

worked with the Hamilton Community Foundation to arrange an agreement that is still in place: if a Hamilton county adult attends

GED® classes in Aurora and passes the GED, the Foundation will reimburse the testing fees to the student. Bill was instrumental in getting this collaboration in place. Adult Education thanks Bill for his 23 years of support. We'll miss him.



GED® Success!

By: Rodney Dorador, Northeast Community College GED® Graduate



I worked as a production supervisor in the manufacturing world for several years and felt like I was stuck because I didn't have a high school diploma

or GED®. The only way to move up in the ranks of my company was to work on my GED® and pursue a college education. The GED® allowed me to do that.

My GED® diploma has helped me in several ways. I am now the Safety Coordinator for my company and I'm enrolled and actively pursuing a degree in Occupational Health and

Safety through Eastern Kentucky University.

Obtaining your GED® can be one of the best moments of your life. It will lead you down a path of success and allow you to do things you have never been able to do before, like applying for that job you wanted or pursuing a higher education.

I want to share a quote by Steve Jobs that inspired me during my pursuit for a GED® and now my college education:

Here's to the crazy ones — the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently — they're not fond of rules. You can

quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things.

They push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.

—Steve Jobs

I think all communities should support their local GED® programs. A GED® program is only going to make a community better, stronger and more educated. By supporting the program, you allow people to better their lives for them and their family.